



Department of Defense
Individual's Briefing

SMALLPOX VACCINATION PROGRAM

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Threat

***Smallpox would disrupt military missions,
because it is contagious and deadly***

- **Smallpox is a contagious disease that spreads from one person to another**
- **A smallpox outbreak would significantly affect military readiness**
- **Before smallpox was eradicated, it killed many millions of people over hundreds of years**
- **Terrorists or governments hostile to US may have or could obtain smallpox (variola) virus**

Smallpox Disease

- **Disease Progression:**
 - Incubation 7-17 days
 - Contagious day or two before rash
 - Characteristic rash—deep, tense blisters by Day 2 of rash
 - Turns to round, deep pustules that dry to scab by Day 9
 - Scabs separate, leaving scars
- **Mortality:**
 - 25-30% overall in unvaccinated population
 - Infants, elderly, immunocompromised higher (>40%)



Smallpox Vaccine

- **The vaccine is made from virus called *vaccinia***
 - Another “pox”-type virus related to smallpox
 - Cannot cause smallpox
- **The vaccine helps body develop immunity to smallpox**
- **Vaccine used for Service Members passes all tests required by Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**
- **Smallpox vaccine was very first vaccine (1796) and has been used successfully for over 200 years**

Vaccine Effectiveness

*Smallpox vaccine prevents smallpox,
but requires very careful use*

- **World Health Organization (WHO) used this vaccine to eradicate natural smallpox**
 - 95% of people are protected within 10 days
 - Can protect up to 3 days after exposure
 - 4-7 days after exposure likely offers some protection
 - Solid protection lasts for 3 to 5 years
 - Partial protection lasts longer; revaccination needed
- **Vaccine used round the world; in World War I & II**

Exemptions to Vaccination

Some people should not get smallpox vaccine, except under emergency situations. A Medical Exemption is given IF:

- **Personal or household contact:**

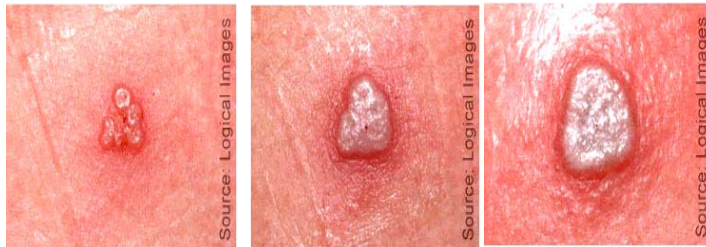
- Immune system is not working fully (due to disease or medication)
- Have or had eczema or atopic dermatitis
- Have active skin diseases, such as:
 - Burns, psoriasis, contact dermatitis, chickenpox, shingles, impetigo, uncontrolled acne, until it clears up or is under control
- Pregnant
- Close contact with someone with the risk factors above ↑

- **Personal Only:**

- Serious heart disease (such as angina, heart attack, congestive heart failure, other cardiac problem) or ≥ 3 risk factors
- Use steroid eye drops or ointment or recovering from eye surgery
- Breastfeeding
- Allergic to smallpox vaccine or a component

Side Effects: Expected and Normal

- **A red blister that should turn white 6 to 8 days after vaccination. Then it will turn into a scab.**
 - This shows successful vaccination.
 - If no white blister, may need another vaccination.
 - Most people experience normal, mild reactions, such as:



See also:

www.bt.cdc.gov/training/smallpoxvaccine/reactions/normal.html#

- Itching
- Burning sensation
- Sore arm
- Fever
- Head & body ache
- Fatigue
- ITCHING!

- **Symptoms usually peak 8 to 12 days after vaccination.**

Side Effects: Serious and Rare

- **Reactions that can be serious and need medical attention:**
 - Accidental spread of virus on yourself or to another person
 - Widespread vaccine rash where blisters break out away from vaccination site (generalized vaccinia)
 - Allergic rash after vaccination (erythema multiforme)
 - Inflammation of or around heart (myo-pericarditis), beginning with chest pain or shortness of breath
- **Life-threatening reactions that need immediate attention:**
 - Serious skin rashes in people such as those with eczema or atopic dermatitis (eczema vaccinatum)
 - Ongoing infection of skin with tissue destruction (progressive vaccinia or vaccinia necrosum)
 - Postvaccinal encephalitis, inflammation of the brain

Take Care of Your Vaccination Site



This woman touched her vaccination site, then touched her eye.

She recovered with a scarred eyelid.

- **Use bandages.**
 - Change them every few days
 - Discard bandages in sealed or double plastic bags
 - Keep site dry
- **Wear sleeves to cover the site.**
 - Even at night, if you sleep with someone.
- **Wash your hands often!**

Be Careful Around Others

- **Until your scab falls off**, avoid spreading vaccine virus to close contacts, particularly with people exempted from getting vaccinated
- **Do not share a bed, bunk, or cot with people who are exempted from vaccination**
- **Do not share clothes, towels, linen, or toiletries**
 - Launder clothing, towels, and sheets in hot water with detergent or bleach.

Pregnancy & Infant Care

- **Defer smallpox vaccinations until after pregnancy:**
 - When pregnant women get smallpox vaccine, pregnancy usually goes well
 - In rare cases, vaccine virus caused vaccinia infection of the fetus
- **Women: Avoid getting pregnant for 4 weeks after smallpox vaccination**
- **Screening will question possibility of pregnancy**
- **Take care to prevent spread of vaccine virus to infants up to 1 year of age. ALWAYS wash hands before handling infant (e.g., feeding, changing diapers)**
- **Smallpox vaccine not recommended for nursing mother, as it could put infant in close contact with mother's vaccination site**

Adverse Event Reporting

- **Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)**
 - FDA and CDC review 100% of adverse-event reports
- **DoD requires a VAERS Form submission for:**
 - Loss of duty 24 hours or longer (\geq 1 duty day)
 - Hospitalization
 - Suspected vaccine vial contamination
 - Auto-inoculation or contact vaccinia
- **Other submissions are encouraged**
- **Anyone can submit a VAERS Form!**
- **VAERS Forms may be obtained from:**
 - 1-800-822-7967 or www.vaers.org

Reserve Component Adverse-Events

- **Adverse events after DoD- or USCG-directed vaccinations are line-of-duty conditions**
- **Someone with an adverse event in a non-duty status possibly associated to any vaccination:**
 - Seek medical evaluation at a DoD, USCG, or civilian medical treatment facility, if necessary
 - Must report the event to your unit commander or designated representative as soon as possible
 - Consider VAERS submission
- **Commander will determine Line of Duty and/or Notice of Eligibility status, if required**

Help Us Use This Vaccine Safely

- Carefully read & complete screening form
- Contact family members who may know about childhood history of recurrent rashes like eczema
- Talk to close contacts and family members about the vaccination program and safety precautions
- Ask for assistance at any point, if needed by you or your close contacts or if you have safety concerns
- Take care of your vaccination site to minimize adverse events in you and others

Key Messages

- 1. Smallpox would disrupt military missions, because it is contagious and deadly**
- 2. Smallpox vaccine prevents smallpox, but requires very careful use**
- 3. Preserving the health and safety of our people are our top concerns**
- 4. Smallpox protection helps our War on Terrorism:
New threats require new measures of force protection**

Information Sources

- Chain of Command / Supervisors
- Military Vaccine (MILVAX) Agency
 - Website: www.smallpox.mil
 - Toll-Free: **877.GETVACC**
- DoD Vaccine Clinical Call Center: **866.210.6469**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
 - Website: www.bt.cdc.gov
 - CDC National Immunization Hotline: **800.232.2522**
- Walter Reed Vaccine Healthcare Center: **202.782.0411**
(www.vhcinfo.org)
- Call your local Military Medical Treatment Facility (MTF)–
OR–if Reserve Component seeking care at a civilian
facility, contact the Military Medical Support Office
(MMSO) **888-647-6676**